

### **REMARKS**

Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested. Claims 1-42 are currently pending. Applicant has amended claims 19-27. No new matter has been added.

#### **Formal issues**

The Office Action objected to the specification because of a minor informality. Applicant has amended the specification to correct the informalities helpfully noted by the Examiner. Withdrawal of the objection to the specification is respectfully requested.

#### **Claim objection**

The Office Action objected to claims 19-27 because of a minor informality. Applicant has corrected the informality helpfully noted by the Examiner. Withdrawal of the objection to the claims is respectfully requested.

#### **§ 102 rejection**

The Office Action rejected claims 1-8 and 28-34 as being unpatentable over PCT reference WO 03/045762 ("the PCT reference"). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

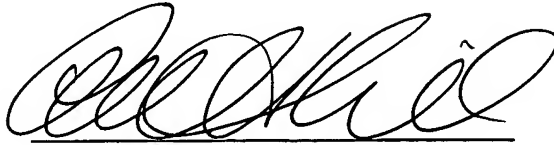
Applicant files herewith a certified English translation of the German priority document, which has a filing date of December 9, 2002. The priority date of this application is earlier than the effective date of June 5, 2003 of the PCT reference. The PCT reference therefore does not constitute prior art against this application. Withdrawal of the rejection is therefore respectfully requested.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for indicating that claims 10-17, 18-27, and 35-42 contain allowable subject matter. As noted above, however, the PCT reference is not prior art against this application. Thus, all of the claims are allowable without any claim amendments.

All objections and rejections having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance, and a Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited. Applicant believes that no additional fees are necessary, however, the Commissioner is authorized

to charge Deposit Account No. 50-1482 in the name of Carlson, Gaskey & Olds for any additional fees or credit the account for any overpayment.

Respectfully submitted,

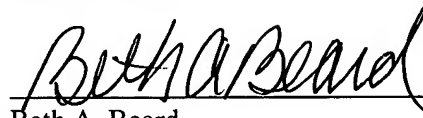


Anna M. Shih, Reg. No. 36,372  
Carlson, Gaskey & Olds  
400 W. Maple Road, Ste. 350  
Birmingham, MI 48009  
(248) 988-8360

Dated: October 14, 2004

**CERTIFICATE OF MAILING**

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail, postage prepaid, in an envelope addressed to Commissioner of Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on this 14<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2004.



Beth A. Beard